

In the Claims

1. - 40. (Cancelled)

41. (New) A method of generating sales leads as a service for one or more vehicle dealerships that are not otherwise affiliated with the service, the method comprising:

maintaining a web site independently of the one or more dealerships that is accessible over a computer network by a consumer who may be considering selling or trading in a first vehicle and potentially purchasing a second vehicle;

offering to the consumer while the consumer is accessing the web site to provide the consumer with an estimated value of the first vehicle, wherein the consumer must provide the consumer's contact information before the estimated value is provided;

maintaining one or more processors in association with the web site, the one or more processors performing the following steps

(a) receiving information indicative of the first vehicle transmitted from the consumer over the computer network, the information indicative of the first vehicle comprising one or more selected from the group consisting of make, model, options and condition of the first vehicle,

(b) receiving contact information of the consumer transmitted from the consumer over the computer network,

(c) determining, independently of the one or more vehicle dealerships, the estimated value of the first vehicle by comparing the information indicative of the first vehicle received from the consumer against a database of vehicle value information contained in one or more data sources maintained in communication with the processor,

(d) providing the estimated value of the first vehicle over the computer network to the consumer such that it appears to the consumer that the estimated value has been generated by an entity that is independent from and non-affiliated with the one or more dealerships, and

(e) actively transmitting the contact information of the consumer and the estimated value of the first vehicle to the one or more vehicle dealerships as a sales lead; and

the one or more vehicle dealerships and consumer following up with one another about the one or more dealerships potentially purchasing the first vehicle from the consumer, or the consumer using the first vehicle as a trade in, and the one or more dealerships potentially selling the second vehicle or another vehicle to the consumer.

42. (New) The method of Claim 41, wherein the step of determining the estimated value of the first vehicle comprises considering buyer criteria selected from the group consisting of a price control option, vehicle specific criteria, historic vehicle issues, and a price offset for state sales tax.

43. (New) The method of Claim 41, wherein the step of determining the estimated value of the first vehicle comprises considering historical data, adding for optional equipment, subtracting for excess mileage, and subtracting for physical and/or mechanical condition flaws.

44. (New) The method of Claim 41, wherein said vehicle identifying information is used to generate an appraisal report.

45. (New) The method of Claim 41, wherein said estimated value is determined as an estimated value range.

46. (New) The method of Claim 45, wherein a low end of said range is a wholesale value derived from auction data from wholesales vehicle sales, and a high end is calculated as a percentage above said low end range.

47. (New) The method of Claim 46, wherein said percentage is between about 8 to 10 percent.

48. (New) The method of Claim 41, wherein said estimated value is provided as a trade-in allowance accounting for state sale tax.

49. (New) The method of Claim 41, wherein the consumer's contact information comprises one or more selected from the group consisting of name, street address, phone number, and email address.